

In the reports at hand from New Orleans, the attempt is made apparently only to provide the addicts with their drug at a fair price and thus do away with the illicit drug peddler, who is, as stated above, the crux of the whole problem. Such a plan does not seem advisable on its face. There is nothing to prevent the addict securing as much additional dope from the illicit dealer as he can pay for. There is no promise of cure in any plan separated from hospital or institutional restraint and medical treatment. And if there is no immediate urge to definite cure, it is hard to see what has been accomplished but some more or less sentimental and ill-founded temporary relief for the addicts. Any successful method must go deeper than this.

The drugs most used in New York were the opium alkaloids and derivatives. These are too valuable to mankind and animalkind to be abolished from human and medical use. Not the physician, but the illicit drug purveyor, should be penalized and put out of business. Heroin can be spared and its manufacture prohibited. Drug addict clinics may give splendid results if institutional treatment and cure is the one end and consideration in their operation. Such clinics coupled with a determined administration of the present law, and relentless penalizing of illicit drug dealers, seems the best path of advance in the case of this serious problem. There is no occasion for undue hysteria, however. The menace of drug addiction may be as great a social evil as some claim for it. We have yet to see authoritative proofs of a greater distribution than that noted above by the Public Health Service.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

In the January number the Journal will open a Hospital Service Section. In each issue of the Journal during 1920 we will present hospital hints and brief timely articles and practical suggestions on construction, administration and the scientific and community service that hospitals should render.

This constructive service of the Journal, beginning with the New Year, will be helpful to the hospitals, beneficial to the patients and public and valuable to every ethical member of the medical profession.

We have an intimate and abiding interest in promoting the welfare and enlarging the field of service of all the institutions of our State, large or small, that are worthy to be called hospitals.

Hospital improvement is essential to the progress of scientific medicine. The profession has realized for some time that some hospitals were not keeping step with the onward march and that others were not filling the functions of real hospitals. Few hospitals, however, are devoted to their defects and most are anxious and ready to remedy them.

The imperative need and the vast field for improvement in hospital service have impressed all who are giving this great subject thoughtful attention. We will endeavor, in a broad co-operative spirit, to supply a portion of this imperative need and fill a part of this vast field with concrete facts. The purpose of the Journal's Hospital

Service Section will be to make a practical contribution to hospital betterment by presenting the factors that must be combined to make progressive hospitals more efficient and serviceable.

JUSTICE VERSUS "SCIENCE."

Statements made by Justice Wilbur lauding the achievements of modern medicine have been hastily followed by a resentful reply from Peter V. Ross, the official guardian of Christian Science Publicity.

Mr. Ross demurs to all the conclusions of Justice Wilbur in reference to medical conquests and makes the amazing counter statement that during the influenza pandemic, "Christian Science quietly healed thousands who turned to it for help, while modern medicine stood by helpless, ignorant alike of the cause, cure and prevention of the malady."

Mr. Ross strangely accepts the medical testimony that an epidemic existed, and the medical diagnosis that it was influenza. His indefinite statement of thousands would be more conclusive if he offered definite morbidity and mortality statistics.

Who has the records on which he bases the statement of "healing thousands?"

Of course, "the healing" was done "quietly" and the records are quiescent. But Mr. Ross seems to forget that unless matter exists there could not have been anything the matter with these thousands.

Mr. Ross advances a new theory of immunity in attacking Justice Wilbur's position. "In his age," says Mr. Ross, "the American Indian lived by swamps and other breeding places of germs in blissful ignorance of their reputed deadliness and hence with complete immunity from their attacks. The Asiatic of today repeats the Indian experience. But when medical institutes acquaint him with the fancied danger of his ways of living, without affording him any adequate prevention or remedy, his troubles will begin, not however, because of germs, for he now grows fat on them, but through his newly acquired fear of them."

The absurd theory of complete immunity accompanying "blissful ignorance" was sadly shattered when little Peter playfully poked fire with a stick of dynamite.

Another astounding statement of Mr. Ross, that can only be explained on the basis of his blissful ignorance of sanitation, is "wholesome sanitation has no connection with medicine."

Mr. Ross becomes queerly facetious in referring to Luke, "the beloved physician," "standing at attention with his medicine chest," but not lending first aid.

Mr. Ross should tell such stories to the marines, to our soldiers of the world war, to the Red Cross forces who know the value of modern medicine. Mr. Ross doubtless claims that "Christian Science" quietly healed thousands of those who were wounded and sick in the war without any material means and by the same methods "demonstrated as effective during the 'Flu'."

There is no record of any of our fighting forces using or recommending Mrs. Eddy's "scientific"